

**Camden Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting
May 26, 2010**

In lieu of the regular monthly meeting, a roundtable discussion of the Megunticook River pathway was held with the following attendees:

Karin Rector, chair; Doug Johnson, vice chair; Carla Ferguson; and Bob Gassett, all from CCC; Roberta Smith, town manager; Ian Stewart, CMLT; Jeff Kuller, director Parks and Rec.; Ray Andresen, chair Parks and Rec.; Geoff Scott and Lisa Lattes, Pathways Committee; Nancy Caudle-Johnson, Citizens for a Megunticook Riverwalk

After a round of introductions, Karin asked people to talk about what their thoughts were on how to get the riverwalk underway. A map of the property was on view, along with several photos of the property while the Tannery was still located on it, courtesy of Carla, and Nancy brought two Arbor Day posters that featured the riverwalk.

The question on everyone's mind was how and when to start the process of making the river pathway more usable to the public. Some comments were:

- It should be homegrown, not facilitated from the outside
- Parks and Rec. "owns" the process, and thus Jeff Kuller is the overseer
- The selectboard holds the power for what is done
- The CMLT is the holder of the easement and also holds power
- Grants are available (DOT perhaps)
- How the Tannery property is developed when sold can affect the process
- Invasive species are present, including poison ivy
- The process will involve manual labor and planning
- DEP approval is necessary to do anything with the concrete slabs (VRAP area, former toxic site)
- Prioritize and do a good job with that
- Access points should be made clear
- The boundaries must be clearly seen by the workers and others

The following actions were recommended to begin the process:

Ian Stewart with the help of Bob can place temporary markers so volunteers and other interested parties can see the property bounds.

Step 1: Jeff Kuller heads up a steering committee of the interested groups. Representatives are: CCC (Bob, with Carla as alternate), Pathways (Geoff), CMLT (Ian), Citizens for a Megunticook Riverwalk (Nancy). Each group should have one representative and an alternate.

Step 2: The steering committee meets at 8 a.m., June 2 at Geoff's office to plan an initial work day with volunteers at the site to address invasive (or nuisance) plants. Bob plans to write a letter, which he will share with Jeff K. before publication.

Step 3: post boundary stakes within the next two weeks.

Invasive species noted at the site include poison ivy, Norway maple, Japanese knotweed, barberry, multiflora rose, burdock, honeysuckle, and buckthorn.

No removal of any part of the large concrete slab can be done without EPA approval.

Grants are available for various pathways and once the group has established a process and vision, that can be pursued for improvements.

In the meantime, a homegrown approach to get started is to establish volunteer work days to clean up a trail and remove unwanted vegetation, plant desirable vegetation, and get a feel from the community about what the pathway should look like, within the language of the easement, which is held by CMLT.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karin Rector

Meetings of the Camden Conservation Commission are held the last Wednesday of every month. The next meeting is June 30, 7 p.m., WSCR